

## President's Message in Reference to the Virginias.

WASHINGTON, Jan. 5.—The President today sent the following message to the Senate and House of Representatives:

In my inaugural message of December last, I gave reason to expect that when the full and accurate text of the correspondence relating to the capture of the ship and crew and the restoration of the ship and survivors, would be transmitted to Congress. In compliance with expectations then held out, I now transmit the papers and correspondence on the subject.

On the 25th of September, 1879, the Virginias was registered in the Custom-house at New York as the property of a citizen of the United States, having first made the oath required by law that he was the true and only owner of the said vessel, and that there was no subject or citizen of any foreign province or state, directly or indirectly, by way of trust, confidence or otherwise, interested therein. Having complied with the requisites of the statute in that behalf, she was cleared in the usual way for the port of Havana, and on or about the fourth of October, 1879, sailed for that port. It is not disputed that she made the voyage according to her clearance, nor that, from this day to this, she has not returned within the territorial jurisdiction of the United States. It is also understood that she preserved her American papers, and that when within foreign ports she made a practice of putting forth a claim to American nationality, which was recognized by the authorities at such ports. When, therefore, she left the port of Kingston in October last, under the flag of the United States, she would appear to have had, as against all powers except the United States, the right to fly that flag, and to claim the protection as enjoyed by all regularly documented vessels, registered as part of our commercial marine. No state of war existed conferring upon maritime powers the right to molest and retain upon the high seas a documented vessel, and it cannot be pretended that the Virginias had placed herself beyond the pale of law by acts of piracy against the human race. If her papers were irregular or fraudulent, the offense was one against the laws of the United States, justifiable only in their tribunals.

THE RECLAMATION. When, therefore, it became known that the Virginias had been captured on the high seas by a Spanish man-of-war, that the American flag had been hoisted down by the captors; that the vessel had been carried to a Spanish port, and that Spanish tribunals were taking jurisdiction over the persons of those found on her, and exercising that jurisdiction upon American citizens, not only in violation of international law, but in contravention of the provisions of the treaty of 1795, I directed a demand to be made upon Spain for the restoration of the vessel and the return of the survivors to the protection of the United States, for a salute to the flag and for the punishment of the offending parties.

THE PROTOCOL. The principles on which these demands rested could not be seriously questioned; but it was suggested by the Spanish Government that there were grave doubts whether the Virginias was entitled to the character given her by her papers, and that therefore it might be proper for the United States, after the surrender of the vessel and survivors, to dispense with a salute to the flag, should such facts be established to their satisfaction. This seemed to be reasonable and just. I therefore assented to it on the assurance that Spain would then declare that no insult to the flag of the United States had been intended. I also authorized an agreement to be made that, should it be shown to the satisfaction of this Government that the Virginias was improperly bearing the flag, proceedings should be instituted in our courts for the punishment of an offense committed against the United States. On her part, Spain undertook to proceed against those who had offended the sovereignty of the United States or who had violated their treaty rights. The surrender of the vessel and survivors to the jurisdiction of the tribunal of the United States was, in addition, a recognition of the principles on which our demand had been founded.

THE SURRENDER. I therefore had no hesitation in agreeing to the arrangement finally made, under which two Governments—an arrangement which was moderate and just and calculated to cement the good relations which have so long existed between Spain and the United States. Under this agreement the Virginias, with the American flag, was delivered to the Navy of the United States at Bahia Honda, in the island of Cuba, on the 16th ult. She was in an unseaworthy condition. On the passage to New York she encountered one of the most tempestuous of our winter storms. At the risk of their lives, the officers and crew placed in charge of her, attempted to keep her afloat. Their efforts were unavailing and she sank off Cape Fear. The prisoners who survived the massacre were surrendered at Santiago de Cuba on the 18th ult., and reached the port of New York in safety.

ACCOMPANYING DOCUMENTS. The evidence submitted on the part of Spain to establish the fact that the Virginias at the time of her capture was improperly bearing the flag of the United States is transmitted herewith, together with the opinion of the Attorney-General thereon, and a copy of the note of the Spanish Minister, expressing on behalf of his Government, a disclaimer of any intent of indignity to the flag of the United States.

[Signed] U. S. GRANT.

## THINGS WORTH REMEMBERING.

—A fruit tree overloaded with fruit will not yield a harvest that will sell for as much money as half of it would if the other half had been removed at the proper time.

—To extract ink from cotton, silk and woolen goods, saturate the spots with spirits of turpentine, and let it remain several hours; then rub it between the hands. It will crumble away, without injuring either the color or the texture of the article.

—Never put a particle of soap near your silver, if you would have it retain its original luster. Where it wants polish, take a piece of soft leather and whiting and rub hard. The proprietor of one of the oldest silver establishments in Philadelphia says that "housekeepers ruin their silver by washing it in soap suds, as it makes it look like pewter."

—When color on a fabric has been accidentally or otherwise destroyed by acid, ammonia is applied to neutralize the same, after which an application of chloroform will in almost all cases restore the original color. The application of ammonia is common, but that of chloroform is but little known. Chloroform will also remove paint from a garment or elsewhere, when benzole or bisulphide of carbon fails.

—It is said that a solution of two-thirds of a pound of Castile soap to a gallon of water laid on a damp wall as a wash, and next day followed by another wash of alum water—two ounces dissolved in a gallon—will cure the inconvenience and prevent any further recurrence of it. It is so simple a thing that housekeepers troubled with damp places in their dwellings will be glad to try it for themselves.

—Only those afflicted with chapped hands can appreciate the suffering of many a hard worker during the winter months. We give a recipe that may be relied on as a cure for the malady: One ounce each of spermaceti, white beeswax, gum camphor, and two ounces of almond oil. Put in a tin cup, place in a vessel of boiling water, and melt together. Every time the hands are wet rub a little of this over them. Lined oil and common beeswax will answer the purpose, but ointment is not so nice as the above.

—Take a dried cone or burr of a white pine or a fir tree, which has shed its seeds, and sprinkle various kinds of grass and many bird seeds into its vacant openings; then cover them slightly with fine sowing sand, and place the cone into a wine-glass, or a small vase filled with water. In

a few days the cone will have absorbed so much moisture that its circles will close up; in a few more, the seeds will sprout, and soon their tiny shoots will form a pyramid of living green, beautifully relieved by the dark brown pedestal formed by the pine cone; and if the water is renewed as it evaporates, the grass will grow and even flower in the miniature garden. A number of different sized cones can be procured and placed in a shallow glass preserve dish, when the effect will be more beautiful, because many varieties of grass can be sown.

Why should it be considered impolite or awkward to use the left hand? Looking at the question apparently as if the answer is "one of them things that no fellow can find out," children are practically taught that the left hand is the only thing in creation for which there is no use. There may be physiological reasons why men should have a natural tendency to give most use to their right hands, or the tendency may be only hereditary, but even though there are physiological reasons for holding pen, hammer, jack-plane or sword, there could be no sound objection to the use of either hand at all kinds of work. The advantage of having two hands equally skilled or trained is similar to that of having two strings to one's bow, for at any time the "other" may be the only one available. As to awkwardness, the man might just as well be considered awkward who can only use one hand with skill, let it be either the right or the left hand.

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